

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Economy, Employment and Skills Overview and Scrutiny
Committee – 15 December 2010

Subject: Site Visit to Manchester Airport and Manchester Enterprise
Academy

Report of: Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit

Summary

This report provides a summary of the findings from the Economy, Employment and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee site visit to Manchester Airport and the Manchester Enterprise Academy.

Recommendations

Members are invited to comment on their experiences from the site visit.

Wards Affected:

All

Contact Officers:

Name: Carolyn Whewell
Position: Scrutiny Support Officer
Telephone: 0161 234 3011
E-mail: c.whewell@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

None

1. Introduction

1.1 Members of the Economy, Employment and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee attended a site visit to Manchester Airport and Manchester Enterprise Academy on Tuesday 7 December 2010. This report provides a brief description of the presentations made by the Airport, the site visit to the Academy and the responses to specific questions asked by members. Members of the Committee are invited to discuss their experiences from the visit.

2. Background

1.2 Members of the Economy, Employment and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee met with staff at the airport to explore the economic benefits of the Airport and how it supports training and employment opportunities for local residents. Following this, members went on a tour of the Manchester Enterprise Academy, a local academy school sponsored by the Airport to look at their role in providing work experience and training for young people.

1.3 The purpose of the site visit was to:

- To look at the economic benefits of Manchester Airport to the city and the city region, particularly in relation to jobs, skills, transport and tourism;
- To look at how the airport and hotels in the area attract tourism into the area;
- To look at Manchester Airport Academy and how the Airport provides training and employment for local residents through the academy;
- To look at how the airport and its sponsorship of the Manchester Enterprise Academy provides support for local residents into training and employment.

3. Manchester Airport

3.2 John Twigg, Group Planning Director, Andy Needham Programme Manager, John Bottomley and Wendy Sinfield, Community Relations Manager met the group on arrival. John Twigg gave a presentation on the economic benefits of the Airport, the numbers of people employed directly and indirectly by the Airport and how they are working to turn Manchester into a destination for leisure and business.

3.2 Manchester Airport is the primary airport servicing the Greater Manchester City region, with approximately 22 million passengers travelling every year. It employs approximately 18,500 people with 16,520 of these being full time posts. It also indirectly supports the employment of 41,290 jobs throughout the northwest through affiliate companies such as airlines and catering suppliers. There is a vast range of jobs supported, from general catering and retail jobs through to specialists in aviation.

3.3 Most passenger travel at Manchester Airport is outbound but the Airport is working with Marketing Manchester and MIDAS, as well as other partners to

attract inward investment to establish Manchester as a leisure and business destination. Major events such as the Commonwealth games and the UEFA cup final have also attracted a number of visitors into Manchester. They intend to establish the Airport as a gateway to the north of the UK and encourage direct travel into Manchester instead of London. Excellent travel links by rail, road to the rest of the north is a crucial component to achieving this and to serving the needs of the residents and businesses in the North West.

- 3.4 Members asked for clarification on the need to develop better transport links from across the north to the Airport, particularly rail links. The Airport feel that the development of the Manchester Hub is critical for the improvement of rail links between the North's City Regions, increased access to the Airport and to support the growth of the Airport City Concept. The Airport supports the High Speed Rail 2 (HS2) proposals and it is particularly important that the rail line comes to the Greater Manchester City Region. The location of HS2 stations within Greater Manchester is of less importance than ensuring that the rail line is extended past Birmingham but a station at the Airport is preferred.
- 3.5 Members asked questions about the importance of exploiting niche markets and providing direct flights to a range of local haul destinations to attract more people to travel in and out of Manchester rather than having to travel from London. Mr Twigg gave a specific example of how the Airport are meeting demand for specific services. In response to cultural demands from Asian communities outside Greater Manchester with no direct access to a nearby airport, Manchester Airport is looking at providing reliable coach services to and from these areas, particularly where there are poor rail links. Manchester is well placed to benefit from these services as they have regular flights to key long haul destinations for onward travel such as Singapore, Dubai and America.

Airport City

- 3.6 Andy Needham gave a presentation about proposed plans to transform Manchester Airport into a 'mini city' with huge expansion plans for retail, leisure, conferencing and commercial activities across the complex and in the surrounding area. The Airport City concept is based on similar projects at Amsterdam's Schipol Airport, Copenhagen and Barcelona although no single one will be used as the definitive model for Manchester's version. The Airport has a large amount of undeveloped land readily available for development.
- 3.7 The 'Airport City' will develop Manchester as an international transport hub and business destination as an alternative to London. Core airport activities, including the terminals, runways and retail will grow with additional cargo, hotel and logistics facilities as well as retail, conferencing, commercial and leisure developments. These plans are in the very early stages but will provide a number of regeneration opportunities for Wythenshawe.
- 3.8 It is anticipated that the 'Airport City' will create an estimated 36000 direct and indirect jobs. Approximately 20% of the Airport's workforce comes from

Wythenshawe and they aspire to increase this proportion as the plans are developed.

Manchester Airport Academy

- 3.9 Wendy Sinfield provided members with an overview of the Manchester Airport Academy and explained how it supported local residents into employment. The Academy is an employment and training programme helping unemployed people living in the Manchester South Regeneration areas, particularly in Wythenshawe. Students of the Academy are all aged 16 or over. They participate in the 'Star' programme, which is a 26-week course where they are given vocational training and skills (NVQ Level 2 in customer care) and helped to find suitable vacancies at the Airport.
- 3.10 The Airport is also recruiting a tranche of 'Star' teaching assistants to teach literacy and numeracy skills alongside teachers. These recruits will be offered to NVQ level 2 teaching assistant training. Most of these posts will be recruited in January.
- 3.11 240 people have been recruited to the 'Star' programme so far, with approximately 180 of these from the Wythenshawe area. There is a very low drop out rate, which demonstrates the value and success of the project. The management of the project and the training provided to the students is currently funded mostly through the Future Jobs Fund. This funding is secure until March 2011. No funding has been secured to continue the project after this period but the Airport were exploring ways to work with Manchester College to continue the project in some capacity. Members felt that the project demonstrated the value of job creation schemes such as these.
- 3.12 In terms of benefits for employers, there are reduced recruitment costs; increased staff retention and the training and skills are matched to airport jobs. Students of the 'Star' programme are also required to undergo an intensive employee background security check (this is a legal requirement for all staff) where they must have a traceable five-year history. Employers at the Airport are able to access a ready for work pool of potential employees who have already been through all of the necessary clearance procedures.

4. Manchester Enterprise Academy

- 4.1 Following the visit to the Airport, members went on a tour of the Manchester Enterprise Academy accompanied by Simon Thorne, Operations Manager of the Academy.
- 4.2 Manchester Enterprise Academy is sponsored by lead sponsor Manchester Airport and co-sponsors Willow Park Housing Trust, The Manchester College and Manchester City Council. The sponsor organisations work in partnership with the leadership and teaching team to shape the ethos and direction of the academy. They provide support for the running of the academy and for individual students by one-to-one mentoring, vocational courses and ultimately, job opportunities. Manchester Airport is closely involved with

Manchester Enterprise Academy, with staff represented on the school's governing body.

- 4.3 Members toured the facilities including the lecture theatre; year based teaching zones, science labs and classrooms. They were impressed with the quality of facilities and equipment used by the students.
- 4.4 The Airport has provided work experience placements for six year-11 students in the last academic year. The range of these placements has varied from customer service roles to baggage handling. The academy has made the most of the work experience placements offered by the Airport but they are always looking to expand the range of placements offered to students.
- 4.5 Most of the post 16 qualifications at the school are based around the types of jobs available at the Airport. There are 56 students studying A-level sociology, BTEC Level 3 in Travel and Tourism and BTEC Level 2 Travel and Tourism with Avionics. The Academy will also be offering A-level psychology and cabin crew courses from September 2011. Due to the limited number of courses, students are able to study alongside courses at other sixth form colleges.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 Members attending the visit have thanked the Airport officers and staff at the school for facilitating the visit. Members of the Committee are invited to comment on their experiences of the visit and to identify if there is any further information they require from Manchester Airport.